

## The Other War in 1774: Dunmore's War

by Robert L. Kerby

NOT EVERY prospective American revolutionary spent the years from 1763 to 1775 waiting expectantly for the Revolution to happen. In the autumn of 1774, almost a year after Boston celebrated its Tea Party and more than a month after the First Continental Congress convened, over two thousand Virginia and Pennsylvania militiamen marched under the command of Virginia's last royal governor, John Murray, the fourth Earl of Dunmore, to wage a brief but decisive Indian war on the edge of the Ohio country. Despite strained relations between Dunmore and Virginia's legislature, and despite the accumulation of disturbing news from New England, New York, and Philadelphia, neither Dunmore nor his army anticipated the dissolution of Virginia's ties to the British Empire. On the contrary, according to the words of a song recorded enroute by one of the campaign's participants, the "offspring of Britain" who followed Dunmore into Ohio aimed to "extend the Dominion of George our Great King," and they drank "Health to great Dunmore our general also, wishing he may conquer wherever he go."<sup>1</sup> Yet these troops were not Tories. Within months after their return from the Indian frontier many of them would become soldiers of the Revolution, and some would take part in the uprising which chased Dunmore from Virginia's soil. But in the fall of 1774 events had not yet forced these men to choose between America's liberties and loyalty to the Crown, and history had not yet forgotten that many American patriots became revolutionaries belatedly, with only the greatest reluctance.

Dunmore's War was the culmination of a long series of mutual grievances and outrages which, between the spring and fall of 1774, dovetailed to produce a clash of arms between the frontiersmen of western Virginia and the Shawnee and Mingo Indians living along the Scioto, Muskingum, and upper Ohio rivers. Since 1763, the British government had endeavored to restrain settlers from penetrating beyond the Alleghenies, but land companies, distinguished colonists, and footloose squatters looked with hungry eyes toward the fabled Kentucky country, and used every means at their disposal to press claims to western lands. Modifications of the original Proclamation

<sup>1</sup> "John Newell's Journal, Oct. 17, 1774," in Reuben G. Thwaites and Louise P. Kellogg, eds., *Documentary History of Dunmore's War, 1774* (Madison, Wis.: 1903), 361.

Line of 1763, such as those negotiated at Fort Stanwix in 1768 and Lochaber in 1770, served only to give speculators and settlers access to enough Indian land to whet their appetite for more. Summing up the situation in late 1774, Lord Dunmore remarked "that the established authority of any government in America, and the policy of Government at home, are both insufficient to restrain the Americans; and that they do and will remove as their avidity and restlessness incite them." Neglecting to mention his own investments in western land, Dunmore explained that the Americans "do not conceive that Government has any right to forbid their taking possession of a Vast tract of Country . . . which Serves only as a Shelter to a few Scattered Tribes of Indians . . . whom they consider, as but little removed from the brute Creation."<sup>2</sup>

The country under dispute lay west of the Appalachian divide, between the Ohio and Tennessee rivers. In 1768, at Fort Stanwix, the Iroquois Confederacy, which claimed suzerainty over the whole territory in question, ceded the entire region to the whites. But the Iroquois did so without consulting their clients, the Shawnee, the people most affected. Although the major Shawnee settlements were located just north of the Ohio River, in the Muskingum and Scioto valleys, the Shawnee's ancestral hunting ground included much of Kentucky and Tennessee. It was therefore the Shawnee, not the Six Nations, who were threatened by the influx of whites from the seaboard colonies. One important result of the Iroquois' duplicity was the estrangement of the Shawnee from the Six Nations. As early as 1771 the Shawnee, in defiance of the Iroquois, began attempting to compact alliances with other nations in the Ohio Valley, such as the Miami, Wabash, and Illinois. By 1773, according to Lord Dunmore, "messages were interchangeably Sending [sic] between all the Tribes along the Ohio, the Western, and Southern Indians; and many indications appeared of some fatal design."<sup>3</sup> The Iroquois, backed by the British, successfully blocked the consummation of most of these alliances, but their continued interference in Shawnee affairs cost the Six Nations whatever authority they needed to control the angry Shawnee. By 1773, scattered attacks by Shawnee raiding parties against isolated frontier habitations had become common enough to precipitate the evacuation of some outlying settlements, while white trappers, hunters, and backwoodsmen had begun banding together, taking up arms, and responding in kind.

<sup>2</sup> "Lord Dunmore to Lord Dartmouth, Dec. 24, 1774," *Ibid.*, 371.  
<sup>3</sup> *Ibid.*, 374.

Yet war might still have been prevented had Virginia's governor been more amenable to equitable negotiations. In 1773, Captain Thomas Bullitt took a surveying party into the Kentucky country to mark boundaries for army bounty land. While in the west, Bullitt travelled to the Plains of Pickaway in southeastern Ohio, the heartland of the Shawnee nation, to confer with Keigh-tugh-quah, the Cornstalk, the chief spokesman for the Shawnee. In the name of Virginia, Bullitt offered to pay the Shawnee for their Kentucky claims, while promising to permit them to continue hunting south of the Ohio. Keigh-tugh-quah was delighted with Bullitt's terms, and promptly agreed to them. But when Dunmore received news of the agreement he repudiated the terms and recalled Bullitt. Despite the governor's tendency to blame the conflict upon the wanderlust of his rambunctious backwoodsmen, Dunmore's own rigid conviction that the Iroquois cession had abrogated any Shawnee claims to payment or hunting rights contributed to the exacerbation of the crisis. The sniping continued, more people died, panic spread along the frontier, and whites and Indians alike found their options narrowing toward war.

Jurisdictional complications were not confined to the Indian side of the frontier. In 1772, as part of a general program of military consolidation throughout the colonies, General Thomas Gage had ordered the evacuation and destruction of Fort Pitt. The removal of Fort Pitt's regular garrison left a military and political vacuum near the Forks of the Ohio, on the strategic northern flanks of both the Virginia frontier and the Shawnee nation. Pennsylvania's claim to the area had not been formally verified by the Crown, and the Pennsylvania proprietors had done little to establish effective government or a militia defence force in the region. Most of the settlers near Fort Pitt had come from Virginia and Maryland, and the Virginians insisted that "these Colonys has as Good pretensions as Pennsylvania" to the territory.<sup>4</sup> In January, 1774, fearful that Pennsylvania's lassitude in the face of the threat of an Indian war would leave the vital Forks undefended, Dunmore appointed his own magistrate for the Fort Pitt settlement, Dr. John Connolly, and directed Connolly to raise a militia contingent at Pittsburgh. As soon as Connolly tried to muster some militiamen, the local Pennsylvania magistracy, led by Arthur St. Clair, arrested and incarcerated him; but Connolly's associates, George Croghan and Dorsey Pentecost, continued to enlist men anyway. In short order, Dunmore and Governor John

<sup>4</sup> "George Croghan to Arthur St. Clair, June 4, 1772," in Samuel Hazard, ed., *Pennsylvania Archives* (Philadelphia: 1853), Series I, Vol. IV, 432.



Penn were engaged in an exchange of bitter correspondence, each claiming exclusive jurisdiction at Pittsburgh and each demanding apologies for the conduct of the other's magistrates. Meanwhile, between March 28th and April 7th, thanks to the fact that Connolly had a militia and the Pennsylvanians had none, Connolly's troops garrisoned the old site of Fort Pitt, dispersed the Pennsylvania magistracy, and arrested a handful of the leading Pennsylvanians, leaving Virginia in control of Pittsburgh. Dunmore and Penn then appointed commissioners to reach some final accommodation, but since neither side would surrender title to the Forks the issue remained unresolved.

Virginia's seizure of Fort Pitt permitted the organization of militia to proceed undisturbed, but the "scene of anarchy and Confusion" attending the maneuver caused the neighboring Indians to be "greatly alarmed." Their alarm escalated as it became evident that Connolly's magistracy was far more trigger-happy than the pacific Pennsylvanians had been. In January, 1774, some of Connolly's men suddenly fired upon a few Shawnee held as hostages at Fort Pitt. In April, after a party of pioneers had been ambushed west of the mountains and forced to retreat to Wheeling, Connolly declared that a state of war already existed in the Ohio Valley. One of Connolly's lieutenants, Michael Cresap, immediately formed a rifle company and began ranging along the banks of the Ohio near Wheeling, looking for Indians to bushwhack; during the first three days of Cresap's expedition, his band ambushed at least six Shawnee canoes. Reflecting upon the escalation of terror that followed Connolly's arrival, St. Clair speculated that "an Indian war was part of the Virginia Plan" to consolidate possession of Pittsburgh, by making the district dependent upon Virginia's military protection.<sup>5</sup>

By the first week of May, skirmishing had spread from Wheeling as far north as Steubenville, in the country of the Mingo tribe. The Mingo, a small Iroquois tributary, had no claims in Kentucky and no interest in the dispute between the Shawnee and Virginia, but Cresap's bushwhacking brought them into the conflict. About May 3d, some of Cresap's followers massacred a dozen peaceful Mingo who had come to a store near Steubenville to trade. Among those killed was a sister of John Logan, a Mingo war chief. Despite efforts by the Shawnee to hold him in check, Logan and a band of braves went on the warpath, descending upon outlying white settlements with lightning fury. In a touching note to Cresap, however,

<sup>5</sup> "Agent Mackay to Governor John Penn, Apr. 4, 1774," and "Arthur St. Clair to Governor John Penn, May 29, 1774," *Ibid.*, 484-86, 502.

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Logan made clear that "the Indians is not Angry only myself," and insisted that his raids were meant only to retaliate for Cresap's barbarity.<sup>6</sup>

The Shawnee towns on the Plains of Pickaway received word of the skirmishing above Wheeling by the sixth of May. Some chiefs immediately voted for war with Virginia, but Keigh-tugh-quah and a general assembly of tribal notables, meeting at Waketomeka on the Muskingum, decided to try to keep the peace. White Eyes, a Delaware chief whom the Virginians and the Six Nation's dispatched as an intermediary, influenced the Shawnee with the argument "that any unruly conduct . . . will only produce more fatal consequences." Yet the Shawnee sachems knew that they could not restrain their warriors indefinitely. In a blistering letter addressed to Connolly and Croghan, the Shawnee derided the Virginians for asking them "not to take any notice of what your people have done to us," and contemptuously invited the whites "not to take any notice of what our young men may now be doing."<sup>7</sup>

By the time Logan went to war, the whole Virginia frontier, from Pittsburgh in the north to the Clinch and Holston river valleys in the far southwest, was infected with panic. Everywhere, from the Forks to Cumberland Gap, settlers were abandoning their homesteads, throwing up stockades, and feverishly drilling for combat. On April 25th, Dunmore authorized the Virginia officials at Fort Pitt to embody a sufficient number of militiamen to protect the neighboring settlers from both the Indians and the Pennsylvanians. On May 13th, the House of Burgesses asked Dunmore "to exert those powers with which you are fully invested . . . for making provision against invasion and insurrections." Dunmore delayed implementation of the Burgesses' resolution until he received an account of the Shawnee sachems' assembly at Waketomeka—in the interim, he found it necessary to dissolve the Burgesses because of their sympathy for the troublemakers in Boston—but on June 10th, in a circular letter addressed to the county lieutenants along the Virginia frontier, the governor declared that "hopes of a pacification can no longer be entertained." Since "we Should have recourse to the only means which are left in our power to extricate ourselves out of so Calamitous a Situation," Dunmore instructed the county lieutenants "to give orders that the militia of your County be forthwith embodied." He recommended that the militia be used either

<sup>6</sup> "John Logan to Michael Cresap, July 21, 1774," in Thwaites and Kellogg, *Documentary History*, 280-81.

<sup>7</sup> "Journal of Indian Transactions, May 1st-31st, 1774," and "The Shawnee Chiefs to John Connolly, George Croghan, & Co., May 25, 1774," in Peter Force, ed., *American Archives* (Washington: 1837), Series IV, Vol. I, 415, 479-80.

as home guards or in forays against the hostiles, and remarked, in passing, "that a Fort at the Conflux of the Great Kanhaway [Kanawha] and the Ohio," on the southern flank of the Plains of Pickaway, halfway between the mouths of the Muskingum and the Scioto, "would answer several good purposes."<sup>6</sup>

Upon receipt of Dunmore's orders, Colonel William Preston, the county lieutenant for Fincastle, sent Daniel Boone, Michael Stoner, and other emissaries into the wilderness to warn outlying settlers, surveying parties, and isolated backwoodsmen "of the eminent Danger they are Daily in." At the same time, Preston caused a battalion of militiamen to be posted in the Clinch and Holston valleys, and cooperated with neighboring county lieutenants in the frantic business of raising men, stockades, and supplies. None of this came easy. Supply officers protested endemic shortages of ammunition, grain, and camp equipment, while one recruiting officer complained of such ill discipline that he was unable to keep men in camp "unless I kill part and tye the Other."<sup>7</sup> Near Pittsburgh, where Connolly had been enlisting militiamen since January, recruitment proceeded with greater alacrity. Indeed, in mid-June Connolly was able to carry the war into the Indian country, dispatching a company across the Ohio into the Mingo heartland. The expedition was ambushed and driven back to Wheeling, where Connolly established a base for further operations.

All the while, reports came in of increasing activity by roaming Indian war parties, and of the mutual escalation of atrocities. Thirty-seven painted warriors were seen near the Holston valley; snipers harried militia patrols and isolated farmers in Augusta County; within a day's march from Colonel Preston's own home three Indians were spied scalping a family of captive white children. Not all the incidents were perpetrated by Indians. Near Cumberland Gap, the whites offered a bounty of £5 for every severed Indian hand. At Pittsburgh, on June 16th, after some white traders given safe passage by Keigh-tugh-qua had been escorted to safety by a Shawnee patrol, Connolly's militia fired on the Shawnee escorts, wounding at least one. Connolly immediately threatened "severest punishment" to anyone who would "harbour, trade, or correspond with any of the *Shawanese or Mingoes*," and soon declared to St. Clair that "I am determined no longer to be a Dupe to their amicable professions, but on the

<sup>6</sup> "House of Burgesses to Lord Dunmore, May 13, 1774," *Ibid.*, 276; Lord Dunmore to the County Lieutenants, June 10, 1774," in Thwaites and Killoch, *Documentary History*, 22-24.

<sup>7</sup> "Captain William Russell to Colonel William Preston, June 26, 1774," in Thwaites and Killoch, *Documentary History*, 49-50; "Major James Robertson to Colonel William Preston, July 26, 1774," *Ibid.*, 99.



contrary, shall pursue every measure to offend them." St. Clair replied, bitterly, that he "saw not the least probability of war, unless the Virginians forced it on. The different manoeuvres up and down, and a Cross the [Ohio] River, have now probably brought that Event about; who may see the End of it God only knows."<sup>10</sup>

Still, some men hoped for peace. Governor Penn sent a frank letter to Dunmore, stating in no uncertain terms that Connolly's activities were apt to cause a major war, while he addressed another missive, particularly charming and prophetic in tone, to the Shawnee. "Consider, brethren," wrote Penn to the sachems, "that the people of *Virginia* are like the leaves upon the trees, very numerous, and you are but few, and . . . they will at last wear you out and destroy you." In June and July, messages came from the Shawnee indicating that "the Chiefs of all Nations still continue to hold by that Chain of Friendship which has been put into their hands," and some frontier outposts even reported that the Indian patrols were becoming less bothersome: bands of braves "with their guns over their shoulders, quite naked all but their breechclouts," were still to be seen at a distance, but they did little harm and gave no offense.<sup>11</sup> In July, it was rumored that Logan and his war party had returned to the Mingo villages, satisfied with the kills they had made. But there was other news as well, reports that Virginia was raising a great army, that militia reinforcements were hurrying to Pittsburgh, that still other militiamen were gathering in the south for a thrust into the Plains of Pickaway. Connolly, never satisfied with the status quo, demanded that the Shawnee surrender Logan and threatened invasion if they refused. The Shawnee sachems, weary of the game, met in council, ordered their people to concentrate in the more secure western towns along the Scioto, directed their warriors to rendezvous on the Plains of Pickaway, and finally declared war.

News that Virginia was preparing a massive invasion of the Indian country was all too true. In early July, Dunmore devised a campaign plan designed to give "the Enemies a Blow that will Break [them]." The governor proposed to marshal two expeditionary brigades, one near Pittsburgh and the other on the Plains of Greenbrier, nestled in the mountains some fifty miles north of the Clinch and Holston valleys. On July 12th, Colonel Andrew Lewis, the county lieutenant for Botetourt County, was designated com-

<sup>10</sup> "to ———, June 18, 1774," in *Force, American Archives*, IV, I, 429; "John Connolly to Arthur St. Clair, July 19, 1774," and "Arthur St. Clair to John Connolly, July 22, 1774," in *Hazard, Pennsylvania Archives*, I, IV, 548, 550.

<sup>11</sup> "Governor John Penn to the Shawnee, Aug. 6, 1774," and "Deposition of David Giffen, July 26, 1774," in *Force, American Archives*, IV, I, 673, 680; and "Alexander Mc-Kee to Sir William Johnson, June 28, 1774," in *Hazard, Pennsylvania Archives*, I, IV, 522.

mander of the latter contingent. Lewis was directed to "raise all the Men you think willing & Able" from Botetourt and the neighboring frontier counties, "& go down immediately" from the Plains of Greenbrier "to the mouth of the great Kanaway & there build a Fort." Once in place at the confluence of the Kanawha and the Ohio, just south of the Plains of Pickaway, Lewis was to "proceed directly to their Towns & if possible destroy their Towns & Magazines and distress them in every other way that is possible." Meanwhile, Dunmore himself left Williamsburg for Pittsburgh, to take personal command of the brigade being organized there. While Lewis moved against the Indians' southern flank, Dunmore, staging from Pittsburgh and Wheeling with Connolly's militia and whatever additional manpower he might gather, hoped to slice through the Indians' northern defences, thus crushing the hostiles between the prongs of a wide pincer. "[M]eet me at eny Place at Ohio in as Short time as you Can," Dunmore told Lewis; "I need not inform You how necessary Dispatch is."<sup>12</sup>

Enroute to Pittsburgh, Dunmore enrolled eight fresh militia companies, assigned them to the command of Major Angus McDonald, and instructed McDonald to soften up the Indians' northern front. Decamping from Wheeling on July 26th, McDonald and his four hundred troops crossed the Ohio and thrust toward the upper Shawnee and Mingo towns on the Muskingum, reaching Waketomeka by August 2d. After a brief skirmish, the local Shawnee captains agreed to parley, but during the conference one of McDonald's bored pickets took a pot-shot at something in the distance, hit an Indian, and ended the negotiations. Once the conclave dispersed, McDonald razed Waketomeka and six nearby villages, destroyed all the crops and stored grain he could find in the vicinity, and doubled back to Wheeling. By the time McDonald's force returned to the banks of the Ohio, they found Dunmore and Connolly busily drilling almost a thousand more men, in anticipation of the final drive against the Indian heartland.

While McDonald harried the enemy perimeter along the Muskingum and Dunmore trained the Pittsburgh militia, Colonel Lewis set about mustering his brigade on the Plains of Greenbrier. The rendezvous of Lewis' command was delayed not only by the usual supply problems and by the distances which each county contingent had to traverse before reaching Greenbrier, but also by the increasing reluctance of militiamen to enroll for distant service.

<sup>12</sup> "Lord Dunmore to Colonel Andrew Lewis, July 26, 1774," and "Lord Dunmore to Colonel Andrew Lewis, July 12, 1774," in *Thwaites and Kollig, Documentary History*, 26, 95.



The Indians were again raiding down the frontier in force, making it difficult for family men to leave their wives and children exposed to attack. Yet by early September, some five weeks after Lewis issued his call for troops—promising “to reward every Voller in a handsome manner, over and above his Pay; as the plunder of the Count[r]y will be valluable”—Lewis had about 1,100 soldiers, mostly wilderness-wise riflemen, under arms at Greenbrier. The Augusta Line, commanded by Lewis’ brother Charles, numbered about 500 effectives; William Fleming’s Botetourt Line was over 350 strong; and the smaller Fincastle and Culpeper detachments were led, respectively, by William Christian and John Field. The Greenbrier gathering did not pass unnoticed by the enemy. On September 4th, Colonel Fleming wrote to his wife that “there are some Indian Spies attending us, and now and then firing on a stragling person they can have an advantage over,” while four days later Colonel Lewis predicted, accurately enough, that “we may expect they will be picking about us all ye March.”<sup>13</sup>

The Augusta Line broke camp on September 6th and started westward toward the Ohio, trailed by a column of pack horses and a commissary herd of a hundred beeves. The Culpeper company and the Botetourt Line followed between the 10th and the 12th, while Christian’s Fincastle contingent remained at Greenbrier another two weeks to collect additional recruits, supplies, and provisions. Proceeding by easy stages of ten to fifteen miles per day, Lewis’ route column snaked from Greenbrier to the mouth of the Elk River, a northern tributary of the Kanawha. Once across the Elk all the regiments moved in concert along the northern bank of the Kanawha toward the Ohio: the brigade marched in two parallel columns behind a heavy screen of skirmishers, ready for prompt deployment in line of battle. West of the Elk, the men were forbidden to discharge their weapons carelessly, and the sutlers were prohibited from selling any more liquor to the troops. The mountainous terrain was difficult, desertions increased, and frequent sightings of Indian scouting parties kept tensions high. Finally, on the 6th of October, after a march of 140 miles overland from Greenbrier, Lewis’ vanguard reached Point Pleasant, the place where the rapid waters of the Kanawha swirled into the sedate Ohio. The tangled trees and rough pastures across the Ohio, only 700 yards distant, marked the southern frontier of the Shawnee nation.

<sup>13</sup> “Circular Letter of Colonel William Preston, July 26, 1774,” “Colonel William Preston to Wife, Sept. 8, 1774,” and “Colonel Andrew Lewis to Colonel William Preston, Sept. 8, 1774,” *Ibid.*, 82, 140, 142.

Colonel Lewis established his camp atop the bluffs overlooking the confluence of the rivers. His right flank was protected by the Kanawha and his left by the Ohio. Storehouses, latrines, a tent city, and a thin line of entrenchments to guard the eastern approaches to the camp were begun, pickets were posted, drilling was resumed, and the herds and pack animals were pastured beyond the camp's perimeter defences. After reaching Point Pleasant, Lewis received word that Colonel Christian's rear column had already passed the Elk River, as well as a report that Dunmore's wing of the pincer was across the Ohio and driving toward the Plains of Pickaway. Dunmore stated that Indian skirmishers were harassing his flanks, and remarked, in passing, that one of his officers "says he hears disagreeable news from Boston but cannot asert it." By Sunday, October 9th, the bulk of Lewis' brigade, excepting only the Fincastle battalion, was well settled at Point Pleasant. After "hearring a Good Sarman Preached by the Revd. Mr. Terrey," the troops turned in for a good night's sleep, "little Expecting to be Attackd."<sup>14</sup>

In spite of the sniping suffered by Dunmore, the Shawnee, lacking the manpower needed to confront both invading columns simultaneously, had decided to concentrate most of their disposable force against Lewis' command. While Lewis' troops slumbered, an army of 1,000 Shawnee warriors slipped silently across the Ohio, deployed for battle in the woods a mile above the Virginians' camp, and waited for dawn. Shortly after daybreak they fell upon Lewis' herdsmen, drove them back upon the white pickets, and began pushing the picket line toward Lewis's camp. Upon hearing the rattle of firelocks upstream, Lewis immediately deployed a covering line of 300 men beyond the camp perimeter to stay or slow the Indian advance, while he directed the remainder of his brigade to reinforce the line of earthworks spanning Point Pleasant. The Indians smashed into Lewis' preliminary line less than half a mile from the fortifications, shoved the disorganized whites back another two hundred yards, and then began exchanging volley for volley with the Virginia riflemen. Seeing that his forward line had taken the momentum out of the Indians' progress, Lewis abandoned his intention to fight from fortifications, hurried seven or eight additional companies to the front, and effected a stabilization of the battle lines on the rough and tangled ground north of his camp.

For the remainder of the morning the two armies, matched in strength and skill, shredded one another with ripples of riflery and

<sup>14</sup> "Colonel William Fanning's Orderly Book, Oct. 8, 1774," and "Captain William Ingles to Colonel William Fanning, Oct. 14, 1774," *Ibid.*, 289, 240.

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flocks of arrows. Taking advantage of the cover afforded by rocks, underbrush, and trees, and swaying to and fro under the impact of the murderous crossfire, the hostile lines were seldom more than twenty yards apart and often as close as six. Each side frequently sortied, bringing enemies near enough to permit them to slaughter each other with tomahawks, knives, and clubs. The "Enemy being much Suppirour in Number," recalled a white captain, "Disputed the Ground . . . often Runung up to the Very Muzels of our Gunes where the[y] as often fell Victims to there Rage." Through the dense powder smoke and the heavy forest shadows, the whites could sometimes glimpse one of the enemy chiefs—Keigh-tugh-quaa, Blue Jacket, Black Hoof, Red Hawk, Captain Dickson, E-li-ni-pis-co, Sca-pa-thus, possibly the Wyandot Chi-ya-wee, and Pu-ke-shin-wa, the father of Tecumseh—as they ran back and forth, exhorting their braves to "lye close" and "shoot well" and "Fight and be strong."<sup>15</sup> Men on both sides were exhausted by the heat and the labor needed to ram charge after charge down the maws of their gluttonous rifles; companies lost their coherence as the battle dissolved into a series of localized platoon and squad actions; there was no command, no plan, just the instinctive impulse to continue killing.

Shortly after noon, Lewis added four reserve companies to the front, but they arrived only in time to witness the disengagement. For the Shawnee, as tired as the whites and outgunned by them to boot, had begun streaming upriver in defeat. They carried off their wounded and threw most of their dead into the Ohio, to prevent the Virginians from taking scalps. Their withdrawal was impeded by numerous panicky boys and squaws, who had come along "to knock us in the head I suppose," but some of the braves kept up such a spirited rear-guard defence that the whites were unable to pursue. The whites held their line until sunset, in the face of the snipers' sharp but scattered fire, and then fell back cautiously to the security of the Point Pleasant entrenchments. Before retiring they collected the blankets, rifles, equipment and tomahawks abandoned by the Shawnee, as well as twenty scalps. Through the night of October 10th, as the Virginians buried their fifty-four dead and gathered their eighty-seven wounded in a rude field hospital, they could hear the Indians, who had since crossed to the Ohio's northern bank, taunting them with threats of a renewed assault. "They damned our men often for Sons-of-Bitches, said 'Don't you whistle now'

<sup>15</sup> "Captain William Ingham to Colonel William Preston, Oct. 14, 1774," and "Colonel William Christian to Colonel William Preston, Oct. 15, 1774," *Ibid.*, 260, 264.



(deriding the fife) and made verry merry about a treaty."<sup>16</sup> According to the best estimate available, the Shawnee had suffered the loss of 231 effectives killed and wounded, almost one quarter of their total strength.

Christian's rear battalion arrived at Point Pleasant the day after the battle, in time to help care for the wounded, raise a stockade, reinforce the camp's defences, and provision Lewis' troops. On October 12th, in celebration of the victory, all the Indian scalps taken during the conflict "were dressed & hung upon a pole near the river Bank,"<sup>17</sup> while the remainder of the plunder was auctioned to the troops. Letters came from Dunmore reiterating that his wing of the pincer was closing upon the Shawnee towns along the Scioto and urging Lewis to join him, but Lewis concluded that his battered brigade was in no condition to resume its advance before October 17th.

Dunmore's force was indeed closing the vise. While Lewis was enroute to Point Pleasant, Dunmore, with McDonald's 400 veterans and some 800 additional recruits, had decamped from Fort Pitt, passed through Wheeling, and ferried his command down the Ohio to a point near the mouth of the Muskingum River. McDonald's earlier expedition against the upper Shawnee and Mingo towns had effectively neutralized the Indians' northern flank, and hence Dunmore saw no reason to make an extended and circuitous overland march from Wheeling to the Scioto. Instead, disregarding what was left of the villages along the Muskingum, Dunmore followed the Ohio to a point opposite the center of the Shawnee heartland, established a base—Fort Gower—at that place, and prepared to drive due westward from Fort Gower toward the Scioto settlements. Ordering Lewis to join him on the Plains of Pickaway as soon as possible, Dunmore pulled away from Fort Gower early in October, easily punctured the random Indian defensive patrols on the far side of the Ohio, and plunged straight toward Chillicothe Town, the major Shawnee capital on the Scioto. Six or eight Indians were killed along the way and sixteen others captured, but, to Dunmore's initial surprise, his column was not seriously molested. As rumors of the battle at Point Pleasant began to trickle in, Dunmore suspected that the insignificant opposition his troops were encountering was due to the Shawnee army's preoccupation with Lewis' brigade: the Plains of Pickaway had been stripped of warriors, leaving Dunmore a clear path to Chillicothe. Reaching the outskirts of the Scioto villages in

<sup>16</sup> "Colonel William Fleming to William Bowyer, 8, 4, 1774," and "Colonel William Christian to Colonel William Preston, Oct. 12, 1774," *Ibid.*, 254, 263.  
<sup>17</sup> "Colonel William Fleming's Orderly Book, Oct. 12, 1774," *Ibid.*, 346.

mid-October, Dunmore's vanguard found the towns virtually undefended. Dunmore established a fortified base, Camp Charlotte, near the Indian settlements, and waited for the enemy to appear.

Within a day or two, the remnants of Keigh-tugh-quah's beaten army began straggling back from Point Pleasant, dazed, despirited, and hopeless. On the 16th a white renegade, Matthew Eliot, came to Dunmore's tent under a white flag and, in the name of the Shawnee council, asked for Dunmore's terms. Seven days later, after extensive negotiations, the preliminary treaty of Camp Charlotte was concluded and signed. Virginia confirmed the inviolability of the Shawnee territory above the Ohio, but the Shawnee were obliged to surrender any claimed rights to hunt between the Ohio and the Tennessee. In addition, the Shawnee were required to give up all prisoners, horses, and property taken during the war, to afford safe passage for white traders operating along the Ohio, to abide by whatever trade regulations Virginia chose to impose, and to surrender hostages as tokens of good will. While the negotiations were in progress, Lewis' brigade advanced to within seven miles of Camp Charlotte—suffering one casualty, when a militiaman took a shot at a deer and shattered the left kneecap of a comrade—before being dismissed and discharged by the governor. Lewis' troops, and indeed all the embodied militia from the southwestern frontier, immediately disbanded and "set out for home, every body being anxious."<sup>18</sup>

Unlike the Shawnee sachems, John Logan was not ready to treat with the Virginians. In the last week of October, Dunmore dispatched Major William Crawford and 250 Pittsburgh militiamen on a raid against the Mingo town of Seekonk, near the present site of Columbus. Although Crawford was unable to bag Logan and his war party, the Pittsburgh battalion killed five Mingo braves, captured fourteen, scattered the rest of Seekonk's inhabitants, and razed the town before returning to Chillicothe. Logan remained on the warpath until February, 1775, although his last raids were relatively ineffectual and his supporters dribbled away. Finally, having "fully glutted my revenge," Logan just quit. In a pathetic letter to Dunmore, he again explained that he would have remained at peace "had it not been for Colonel Cresap, who last year cut off, in cold blood, all the relations of Logan, not sparing women and children. There runs not a drop of my blood in the veins of any human creature." In a

<sup>18</sup> "Colonel William Christian to Colonel William Preston, Nov. 8, 1774," *Ibid.*, 300-2.

final lament he asked, simply, "Who is there to mourn for Logan? No one."<sup>17</sup>

After Crawford's expedition wasted Seekonk, Dunmore's brigade fell back to Fort Gower. There, while awaiting discharge, his officers resolved, unanimously, "That we entertain the greatest respect for his Excellency, the Right Honourable Lord Dunmore, who commanded the expedition against the *Shawanese*." But at Fort Gower the officers also caught up on the news from the Continental Congress, and went on to resolve, in the same circular letter, that "we will bear the most faithful allegiance to his Majesty King George the Third, whilst his Majesty delights to reign over a brave and free people." The latter resolution went on to caution that "the love of Liberty, and attachment to the real interests and just rights of *America* outweigh every other consideration," and ended by warning Dunmore that "we will exert every power within us for the defence of *American* liberty, and for the support of her just rights and privileges." As if this bittersweet accolade were not sour enough, Dunmore also received a belated letter from Lord Dartmouth, dated September 8th, which castigated him for allowing Connolly to stir up the Indians, for rebuilding Fort Pitt after it had been "demolished by the King's express orders," and for threatening war against the Shawnee.<sup>18</sup> Harassed by colonials and Crown alike, the victorious general quickly dismissed the Pittsburgh militia and hurried back to Williamsburg, arriving on December 5th. There, at least, his triumph was fittingly acknowledged. He received the thanks of the city, the acclamations of the professors of William and Mary College, and, in March, the gratitude of the revolutionary Virginia Convention.

Though a final peace treaty had still to be ratified, it was not to be accomplished under royal auspices. Because of distractions caused by the radicals at Williamsburg, Dunmore himself was unable to return to Fort Pitt as he had intended, to meet the Shawnee delegation. His emissary, Dr. Connolly, was again arrested as a usurper by the Pennsylvanians. By the time Connolly was released and returned to Williamsburg for new instructions, he found that the capital had been seized by revolutionaries and that the governor had been forced to seek refuge aboard a British naval vessel; one of the rebel officers who had helped chase Dunmore from Virginia's soil had been Colonel Andrew Lewis. Connolly accepted a lieutenant

<sup>17</sup> "John Logan to Lord Dunmore, Feb. 8, 1775," in *Papers, American Archives*, IV, 3, 1020.  
<sup>18</sup> "Resolution of the Officers of Dunmore's Brigade, Nov. 2, 1774," and "Lord Dartmouth to Lord Dunmore, Sept. 8, 1774," *ibid.*, 754, 862.

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coloneley in His Majesty's loyal American forces and was directed to raise a royal regiment in the back country, but before he could fulfill his mission he was made prisoner by the revolutionaries. Meanwhile, Virginia's rebel government delegated its own commissioners to treat with the Shawnee. On October 21st, 1775, a final peace, restating the provisions of the Camp Charlotte compact, was signed. Dunmore's War was over.

Yet its effects were felt for some time to come. In the first place, the war threw the whole of the Kentucky country open to pioneers, and within a few short years John Sevier's community was thriving. Second, it pacified the Ohio River frontier at a crucial moment in history, leaving Virginia, Maryland, and Pennsylvania free to concentrate all of their energies upon the war with Great Britain during the initial years of the Revolution. Third, it provided Virginia's revolutionary government with a substantial pool of experienced veteran militiamen, and a young officers' corps newly familiarized with the problems and opportunities of wilderness warfare. George Rogers Clark and Daniel Morgan had both been soldiers in Dunmore's wing of the army, and at least ten of Lewis' officers, including William Campbell, Isaac Shelby, and Lewis himself, later rose to prominence in the service of the Revolution. Fourth, the war may have made Virginia's decision to rebel easier, by demonstrating conclusively that the frontier no longer depended upon royal regulars for defence, and by proving that the Virginia militia was capable of winning a major operation against a clever and dangerous adversary. And finally, the war was an early model for the campaigns of annihilation which the United States would wage against the Indian peoples throughout the next century. Although commanded by a royal officer and designed to protect the western fringes of Britain's continental empire, Dunmore's War was fought exclusively by Americans and carried to a decisive conclusion. If nothing else, the conflict showed that America's soldiers had learned how to fight Indians with facility and ferocity. During the next hundred years, they would have frequent occasion to display both qualities.

Once the muskets crackled at Lexington, Concord, and Bunker Hill, most Americans quickly forgot the march to the Plains of Pickaway. But a few veterans remembered. At Valley Forge, in January, 1778, Captain Robert Elliott of the Virginia Line let his mind wander back to "the 10 day of October which causes woo [to] the Indian savages." Dipping a quill in ink, he scribbled a little ditty on a blank page of his company's orderly book:

I have felt a certain  
 the strength of that  
 now for all that  
 in your heart of the

You are still remembered, and still the same  
 in the present. The only thing of age when the world  
 has passed on, and a distant day comes